

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace paragraph [0033] beginning on page 7, with the following amended paragraph:

[0033] The present network provides ~~consists of~~ a set of nodes that are interconnected at a given point in time. Nodes A-F are shown in the exemplary network 500 of Figure 5. Steps 400-410 involve identifying other peers on the network. At step 400 (in Figure 4), user N, at node A, requests web page `W`. If user N is a new user, an instance of a node (node A in the present case) is initiated by launching a networking program. This program may either be downloaded, loaded via a disk, or pre-installed in the computer. In an exemplary embodiment, the networking program is part of a reference platform that is shipped to each purchaser that represents a node of the network 500 (as well as network 201) of the present system. Alternatively, the entity requesting a web page may be external to the network 500, in which case the site (network node) receiving the request issues a corresponding search request to other peers on the network 500.